

Incredible Years Parenting Programs

Developer: Carolyn Webster-Stratton, Ph.D.

Country of Origin: USA; Seattle, Washington.

First published: 1984.

Implemented: Widely within the USA, UK, Canada, Ireland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Portugal, New Zealand and Australia. Currently there are 9 accredited trainers and 50 mentors in USA, UK, Ireland, Norway, Denmark, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Child Age Range: 1 month-12 years. **(5 programs for different ages)**

General Aims/Goals:

- Treatment of child aggressive behaviour problems and ADHD.
- Prevention of conduct problems, delinquency, violence and drug abuse.
- Promotion of child social competence, emotional regulation, positive attributions, and academic readiness and competence.
- Through improved parent-child interactions, building positive parent-child relationships, improved parental functioning, less harsh and more nurturing parenting, and increased parental social support and problem solving.

Theoretical Background:

- Cognitive social learning theory and particularly Patterson's coercion hypothesis of negative reinforcement developing and maintaining deviant behaviour and Bandura's notions of modeling and self-efficacy.
- Cognitive strategies for challenging negative and depressive self-talk and increasing parenting self-esteem and confidence.

Programme in action:

- The Incredible Years Parenting is part of a series of 3 interlocking training programmes for parents, children and teachers. The parenting programs span the age range of 0-12 years.
- The BASIC parent training has 5 curriculae: Baby Program (8-9 sessions), Toddler Program (12 sessions), Preschool or Early Childhood Program (18-20 sessions) and Early School-Age Program or Preadolescent Program (12-16 sessions).
- The ADVANCE parent program (9 sessions) focusing on more interpersonal skills, anger and depression management and problem solving can follow the BASIC program for high risk populations and families with diagnosed children.
- Each session is 2 to 2.5 hours long and conducted at weekly intervals. Involves 2 group leaders and 10-14 participants.

- Typically food, child care and transportation are provided for each session. For the baby program parents bring their babies to the groups.
- Training set in a problem solving format with parents identified goals, assessments of barriers, and potential solutions.
- Methods include:
 - Discussions;
 - Goal setting and problem solving;
 - Values exercises on benefits and barriers;
 - Principles training;
 - Buddy calls (building support networks);
 - Paired buzzes with partners;
 - Skills training and practice;
 - Cognitive thought training;
 - Group brainstorming to identify social learning principles and effective strategies;
 - DVD vignettes of parents and their children;
 - Role play practice or behavioural rehearsal;
 - Homework assignments including practice and reading;
 - Weekly leader phone calls to parents.
- Materials include:
 - The Incredible Years book or CD for each parent;
 - 9-14 DVDs to show vignettes during the course;
 - Handouts and home activities assignments;
 - Group buzz exercises;
 - Refrigerator Notes.
- Content (depending on age range) includes: Respect and understanding children and their developmental abilities, modelling social skills, child-directed play, balancing power, descriptive commenting, academic, social, emotion and persistence coaching, differential attention, ignoring, modelling principle, having fun. Having developmentally appropriate expectations for child – depending on child’s age, temperament and developmental abilities. Positive parenting, controlling emotions and improving relationships, effective communication skills, family problem solving, enhancing children’s learning, anger management, and managing conflict. Establishing rules, predictable routines and children’s responsibilities as well as ongoing monitoring and supporting children’s academic achievement through by coaching children’s homework and partnering with teachers.

Process:

- The training, which is based on principles of video modelling, observational and experiential learning, rehearsal and practice, self-management, self-reflection and cognitive self-control.
- Assumes a self-learning model involving self-monitoring and weekly goal setting.
- Also explicitly assumes a collaborative relationship between group leaders and parents.
- Reduction of risk factors and increased protective factors through increasing parent, teacher and child competencies.

Training for group leaders/facilitators to run the program:

- Group leaders ideally assumed to be drawn from professionals with masters, higher degrees or diplomas in fields such as psychology, psychiatry, social work, nursing, or counselling, with knowledge of child development and social learning theory and experience of working with parents.
- 3 or 5-day workshops in groups up to 25.
- Facilitator materials include: manual; other reading; video-vignettes to show to parents; sample group session videos for self-study; handouts; books or CD for parents and for leaders.
- Training methods involve:
 - Participants act as parents and course methods are modelled, followed by discussion and analysis;
 - Role play practices as parents and group leaders;
 - Collaborative processes modelled implicitly with extensive discussion and practice in workshops plus consultation based on collaborative model;
 - Videos of actual courses;
 - Brainstorming;
 - Homework.
- Supervision includes:
 - Peer support meetings to review session tapes using Peer and Self-evaluation checklists;
 - Monthly telephone consultations;
 - Feedback on a mid-course videos;
 - Consultation workshops sharing videos of sessions with other group leaders.
- Accredited by:
 - Attending accredited group leader training;
 - Conducting a minimum of two full sets of group programmes;
 - Receiving satisfactory mentor/trainer review of a session video, all documentation and evaluations of the programmes;
 - Attend consultation from a mentor/trainer and usually involves submitting videos of group sessions.

Evaluation:

- Following session protocols;
- Weekly session and final course parent evaluations;
- Group leader checklist review of all sessions;
- Group leader self, peer and/or trainer evaluation forms of a video of sessions;
- Pre and post questionnaires such as:
 - Demographics;
 - Beck Depression;
 - Eyberg or parent & teacher SDQ;
 - Parenting Practices Inventory;
 - O'Leary-Porter Overt Hostility Scale;
 - Post consumer satisfaction evaluations.

Costs:

- The cost to train a group leader averages \$290 (USD), but will depend upon whether there are existing group leaders in the organization/LA and whether the training is done by a mentor or trainer.
- The initial costs of materials for running a parent course is \$1595 (USD) for the Basic program, and \$1995 (USD) for the School Age Basic plus Advance programs. Other programs are available; prices vary. Additionally the group leaders provide books (available in the UK for £16) for parents. However, the DVDs once purchased can be used repeatedly on any number of further courses.
- Costs of supervision/consultation to enable trainee group leaders to become accredited is approximately £455, or \$600 - 800. The fee itself is \$400, and other costs relate to preliminary consultation and equipment. *the amount in GB pounds will depend on the exchange rate current at the time of invoicing.

Trainers:

- The programme has designated and accredited mentors and trainers.
- Mentors are permitted to train within their own agency or defined geographic district and are funded by their agencies; whereas trainers are contracted with by IY and may conduct training more widely.
- Mentor accreditation includes:
 - Accreditation first as an IY group leader;
 - Nomination by an existing IY mentor or trainer;
 - Successful completion of at least 8 BASIC programmes with submission of feedback documentation and DVDs;
 - Participation in consultation led by a certified IY trainer;
 - Positively evaluated group video and review by an IY trainer post group leader accreditation;
 - Training in supervision process and workshop delivery protocol.
 - Positively evaluated workshop video and supervision session by IY trainer;
 - Completed competent video reviews for group leader certification and submitted supervisory reports; achieved reliability with an accredited mentor.
 - Positive evaluations from 6 group leaders mentored.
 - Completed numerous evaluated mentor workshops.
 - Co-trained with other Incredible Years trainers.
- Trainer accreditation includes for example:
 - Accreditation as a mentor;
 - Research training, experience and knowledge-based related to evidence-based interventions, research and evaluation methods;
 - Understanding and experience regarding dissemination and implementation strategies to promote fidelity of program delivery by practitioners and organizations;
 - Masters or preferably doctoral level education;
 - Ongoing close relationship with Incredible Years organization in Seattle and with developer;

Research:

- 12 randomized trials of the parenting programmes by Webster-Stratton and colleagues (e.g. C. Webster-Stratton, 2006; C. Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2003) and six independent replications (including those in UK) have shown:
 - Increased parental positive affect (e.g. praise and reduced criticism and negative commands).
 - Increased effective parental limit-setting, replacing spanking and harsh discipline with non-violent discipline techniques and increased monitoring of children.
 - Reductions in parental depression and increases in parental self-confidence.
 - Increased positive family communication and problem-solving.
 - Reduced conduct problems in children's interactions with parents and increases in positive affect, social competence and compliance.
- Randomised trials have also been conducted in the UK (Patterson et al, 2002; Scott et al, 2001; Hutchings et al, 2007; Gardner et al, 2006) indicating
 - benefits for externalising behaviour of children from 2-9;
 - maintained up to 2 years after the programme;
 - benefits for parenting and parent mental health;
 - using health visitors, child mental health specialists, social workers, nursery nurses, teachers and people from adult education, and the child and family voluntary sector.
- Recruitment rates ranged from 65-78%;
- Attrition ranging from 11-43%.